

the aggrieved party receives the supplement.

§ 426.531 Board's review of the NCD to apply the reasonableness standard.

(a) *Required steps.* The Board must do the following to review the provision(s) listed in the aggrieved party's complaint based on the reasonableness standard:

(1) Confine the NCD review to the provision(s) of the NCD raised in the aggrieved party's complaint.

(2) Conduct a hearing unless the matter can be decided on the written record.

(3) Close the NCD review record to the taking of evidence.

(4) Treat as precedential any previous Board decision made under § 426.547 that involves the same NCD provision(s), same specific issue and facts in question, and the same clinical conditions.

(5) Issue a decision as described in § 426.547.

(b) *Optional steps.* The Board may consult with appropriate scientific or clinical experts concerning clinical and scientific evidence to apply the reasonableness standard to the provision(s) listed in the aggrieved party's complaint.

(c) *Authority for the Board in NCD reviews when applying the reasonableness standard.* In applying the reasonableness standard to a provision (or provisions) of an NCD, the Board must follow all applicable laws and regulations, as well as NCDs other than the one under review.

§ 426.532 Discovery.

(a) *General rule.* If the Board orders discovery, the Board must establish a reasonable timeframe for discovery.

(b) *Protective order—(1) Request for a protective order.* Any party receiving a discovery request may file a motion for a protective order before the date of production of the discovery.

(2) *The Board granting of a protective order.* The Board may grant a motion for a protective order if it finds that the discovery sought—

- (i) Is irrelevant or unduly repetitive;
 - (ii) Is unduly costly or burdensome;
- or

(iii) Will unduly delay the proceeding.

(c) *Types of discovery available.* A party may obtain discovery via a request for the production of documents, and/or via the submission of up to 10 written interrogatory questions, relating to a specific NCD.

(d) *Types of documents.* For the purpose of this section, the term documents includes relevant information, reports, answers, records, accounts, papers, and other data and documentary evidence. Nothing contained in this section will be interpreted to require the creation of a document.

(e) *Types of discovery not available.* Requests for admissions, depositions, or any other forms of discovery, other than those permitted under paragraph (c) of this section, are not authorized.

(f) *Privileged information or proprietary data.* The Board must not under any circumstances order the disclosure of privileged information or proprietary data filed under seal without the consent of the party who possesses the right to protection of the information.

(g) *Notification.* The Board notifies all parties in writing when the discovery period will be closed.

§ 426.535 Subpoenas.

(a) *Purpose of a subpoena.* A subpoena requires the attendance of an individual at a hearing and may also require a party to produce evidence authorized under § 426.540 at or before the hearing.

(b) *Filing a motion for a subpoena.* A party seeking a subpoena must file a written motion with the Board not less than 30 days before the date fixed for the hearing. The motion must do all of the following:

- (1) Designate the witnesses.
- (2) Specify any evidence to be produced.
- (3) Describe the address and location with sufficient particularity to permit the witnesses to be found.

(4) State the pertinent facts that the party expects to establish by witnesses or documents and state whether those facts could be established by evidence other than by the use of a subpoena.

(c) *Response to a motion for a subpoena.* Within 15 days after the written

motion requesting issuance of a subpoena is served on all parties, any party may file an opposition to the motion or other response.

(d) *Extension for good cause shown.* The Board may modify the deadlines specified in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section for good cause shown.

(e) *Motion for a subpoena granted.* If the Board grants a motion requesting issuance of a subpoena, the subpoena must do the following:

(1) Be issued in the name of the presiding Board member.

(2) Include the docket number and title of the NCD under review.

(3) Provide notice that the subpoena is issued according to sections 1872 and 205(d) and (e) of the Act.

(4) Specify the time and place at which the witness is to appear and any evidence the witness is to produce.

(f) *Delivery of the subpoena.* The party seeking the subpoena serves it by personal delivery to the individual named, or by certified mail return receipt requested, addressed to the individual at his or her last dwelling place or principal place of business.

(g) *Motion to quash a subpoena.* The individual to whom the subpoena is directed may file with the Board a motion to quash the subpoena within 10 days after service.

(h) *Refusal to obey a subpoena.* The exclusive remedy for contumacy by, or refusal to obey, a subpoena duly served upon any person is specified in section 205(e) of the Act (42 U.S.C. 405(e)) except that any reference to the “Commissioner of Social Security” shall be considered a reference to the “Secretary.”

§ 426.540 Evidence.

(a) Except as provided in this part, the Board is not bound by the Federal Rules of Evidence. However, the Board may apply the Federal Rules of Evidence when appropriate, for example, to exclude unreliable evidence.

(b) The Board must exclude evidence that it determines is clearly irrelevant or immaterial, or unduly repetitive.

(c) The Board may accept privileged information or proprietary data, but must maintain it under seal.

(d) The Board may permit the parties to introduce the testimony of expert

witnesses on scientific and clinical issues, rebuttal witnesses, and other relevant evidence. The Board may require that the testimony of expert witnesses be submitted in the form of a written report, accompanied by the curriculum vitae of the expert preparing the report.

(e) Experts submitting reports must be available for cross-examination at an evidentiary hearing upon request of the Board or a party to the proceeding, or the report will be excluded from the record.

(f) Except as set forth in paragraph (c) of this section or unless otherwise ordered by the Board for good cause shown, all documents and other evidence offered or taken for the record is open to examination by all parties.

§ 426.544 Dismissals for cause.

(a) The Board may, at the request of any party, or on its own motion, dismiss a complaint if the aggrieved party fails to do either of the following:

(1) Attend or participate in a prehearing conference (the prehearing may be conducted by telephone) or hearing without good cause shown.

(2) Comply with a lawful order of the Board without cause shown.

(b) The Board must dismiss any complaint concerning NCD provision(s) if the following conditions exist:

(1) The Board does not have the authority to rule on that provision under § 426.505(d).

(2) The complaint is not timely. (See § 426.500(b)).

(3) The complaint is not filed by an aggrieved party.

(4) The complaint is filed by an individual who fails to provide an adequate statement of need for the service from the treating physician.

(5) The complaint challenges a provision or provisions of an LCD except as provided in § 426.476, regarding the Board’s review of an ALJ decision. (See § 426.505, regarding the authority of the Board.)

(6) CMS notifies the Board that the NCD provision(s) is (are) no longer in effect.

(7) The aggrieved party withdraws the complaint. (See § 426.523, for requirements for withdrawing a complaint regarding an NCD under review.)